



# MENTAL HEALTH HANDBOOK

for Chinese Students in the  
United States

by Public Health Group





# Outline



01

**Issue Overview**

02

**Methodology & Research Plan**

03

**Key Findings & Analytics**

04

**Demo Handbook**





01

# Issue Overview

What is the common problem we recognized?



# 01 Issue Overview



## Current Problems

Chinese students in the U.S. face **significant mental health challenges**, including cultural shock, homesickness, academic pressure, and social isolation, compounded by language barriers and cultural stigma.

Despite their growing numbers, there are **few resources tailored to their needs**. Research shows high rates of **depression and anxiety** among these students, emphasizing the need for targeted mental health support.

Our research aims to fill this gap by **creating a practical mental health handbook** specifically designed for Chinese students.

Major Cause

cultural  
shock

home  
sickness

study  
pressure

## 02 Research Objectives



### Examine Challenges

- analyzing both quantitative and qualitative insights
- map the full spectrum of psychological struggles unique to this population

### Actionable Strategies

- create culturally adapted coping mechanisms and guidance
- compile and evaluate existing mental health resources



### Determine Causes

- investigate factors surrounding mental health
- assess how policies and services influence students' psychological well-being

### Create Handbook

- integrate materials, tools, protocols, and directories
- also be adaptable for other international student groups
- offer scalable solutions to improve mental health outcomes



02

# Methodology & Research Plan



# 01 Methodology



## Literature Review

- in-depth search for academic papers, reports, and relevant materials related to the mental health of international students

## Online Interviews

- Conduct in-depth, semi-structured interviews to explore the mental health issues they face in more detail
- Record the interviews and transcribe them for subsequent analysis

01

02

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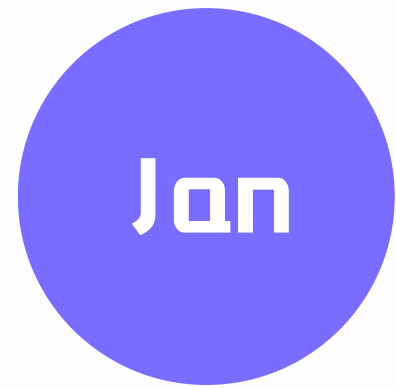
## Online Survey

- cover various aspects such as students' experiences of cultural shock, homesickness, academic stress, social interactions, and their awareness and utilization of mental health resources

## Publish Results

- distribute through popular social media platforms, Chinese student associations in the U.S., and relevant online communities

## 02 Research Schedule



### Literature Review

- Search through academic databases
- Compile a list of relevant materials
- identify key research areas and gaps



### Survey Questionnaire

- Design the online survey questionnaire
- Launch the online survey
- Begin recruiting American students
- Conduct offline interviews



### Data Analysis

- Use statistical analysis tools to identify trends, patterns, and significant factors
- Summarize the key findings



### Handbook Creation

- Organize the content in a logical manner
- Ensure that the language is clear, concise, and accessible to the target audience





03

# Key Findings & Analytics



# 01 Intuitive Outcomes

- Most people **never or do not intend to seek professional help** if they face mental health difficulties. Of the barriers in seeking help, language, lack of time, scheduling difficulties, financial concerns, and stigma.
- There are **mixed responses for the available resources** on campus for students – some think there are enough resources, some think there is a lack of resources.
- For mental health services in the US, there is a lack of cultural awareness/integration. Even when students sought help, they often **don't feel understood** due to different cultural contexts and understanding.

“ *I cook and eat Chinese food to help me feel closer to home.* ”

“ *Offering more flexible and vivid course options, like remote classes, would be helpful – so if it's not a good day mentally, you can stay home and still attend your courses.* ”

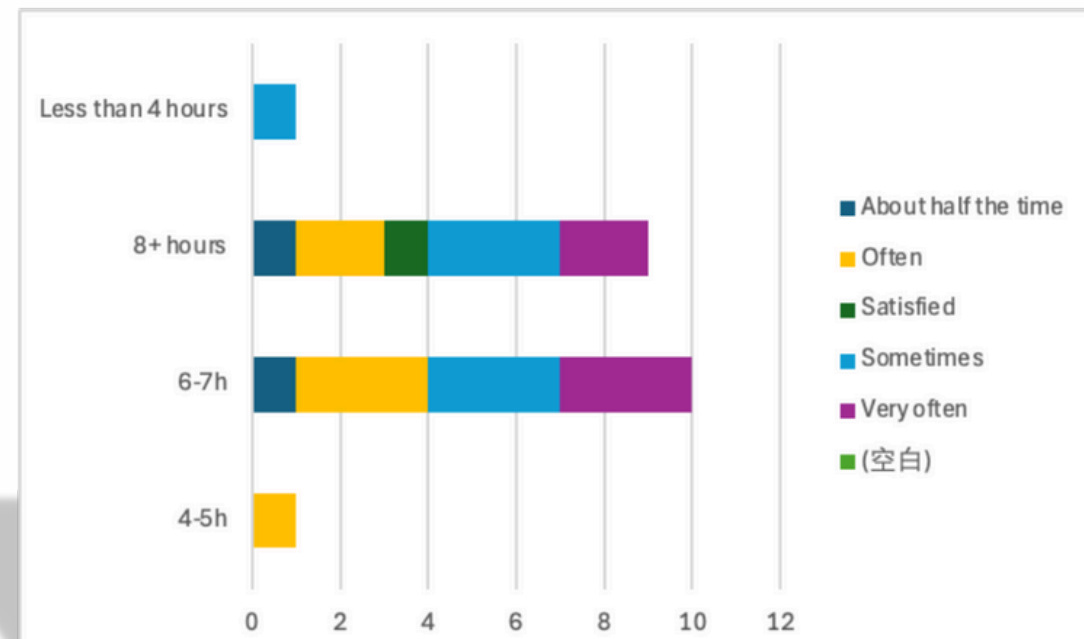
“ *These uncertainties (recent changes in U.S. policies for international students) sometimes make it hard for me to sleep well.* ”



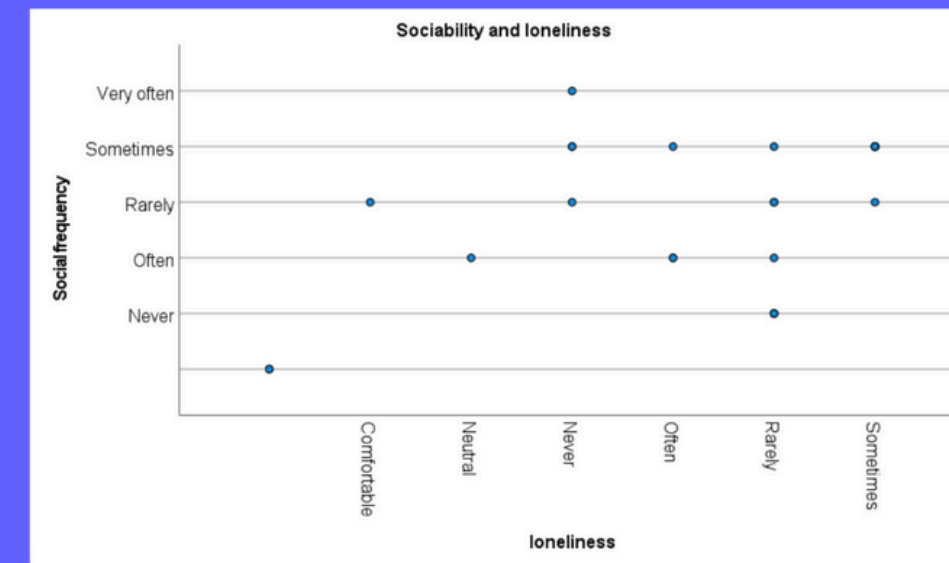
## 02 Counter-Intuitive Outcomes



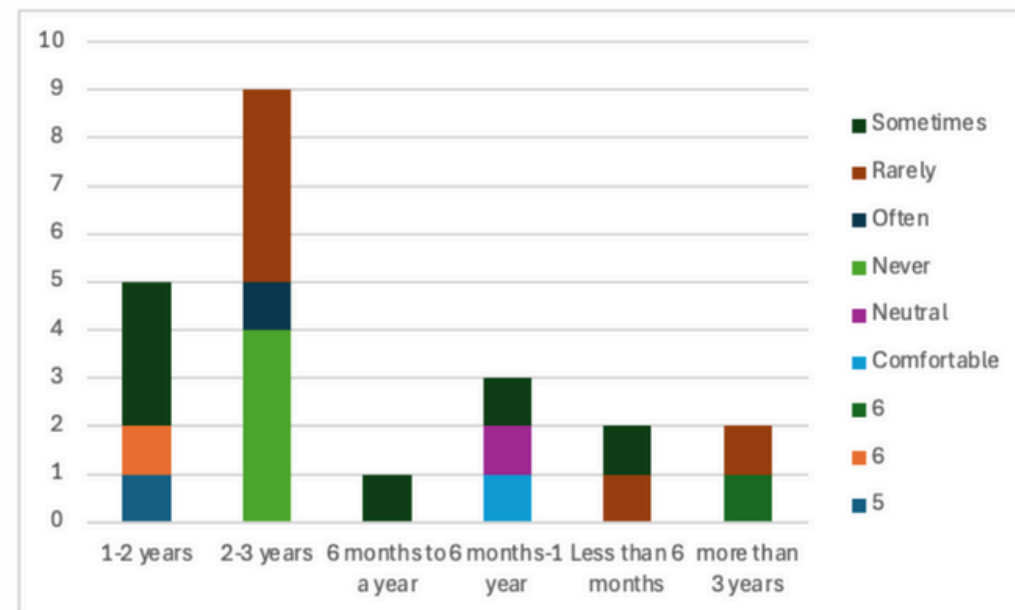
### More Sleep = Lower Pressure?



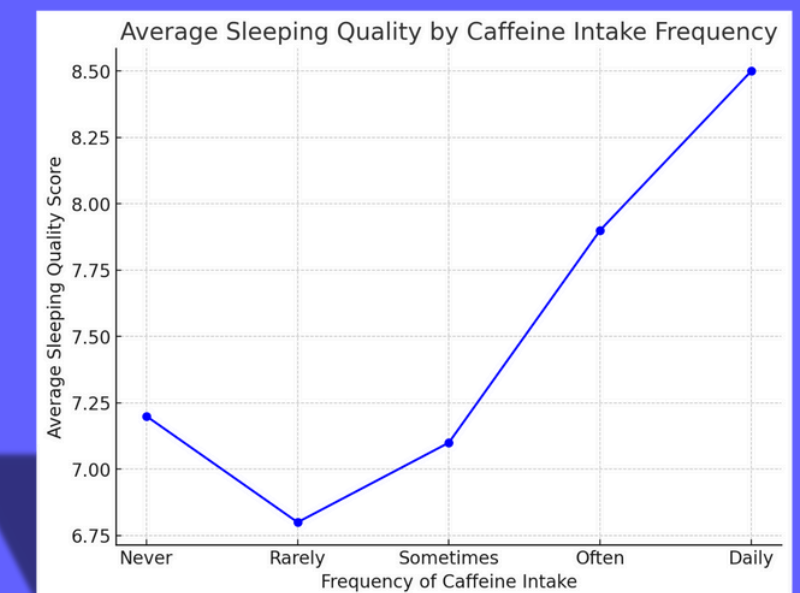
### More Interaction = Less Misunderstanding?



### Longer Stay = Less Isolation?



### More Coffee = Worse Sleep?



## 03 Solvencies



# Actionable & Accessible

We organized the useful services for mental health self-help, based on the problems we recognized.  
Every suggested methods include detailed description of language, cost, availability as well as user feedbacks.  
Online or in-person, daily use or emergency help, your call!



### Mental-Health Apps

- Headspace
- Calm
- Forest



### In-Person Counseling Services

- Asian Mental Help Collective
- BetterHelp
- National Alliance on Mental Illness



### Emergency Crisis Support

- 988 Suicide an Crisis Lifeline
- Crisis Text line
- National Alliance on Mental Illness



### Online Counseling Services

- BetterHelp
- Talkspace
- National Alliance on Mental Illness



04

# A Peek Into Our Handbook Demo👁️👁️





# 01 Anti-intuitive problems? We gotcha!

## High Academic Pressure Despite Enough Sleep

**Issue:** Even with adequate rest, stress persists due to workload, expectations, and internal pressure.

### Specific Self-Help Solutions:

- Use a 3-level task system:
  - A tasks = urgent and important
  - B tasks = important but not urgent
  - C tasks = can wait
- Prioritize only 2 A-tasks per day to avoid burnout.
- Set 25-minute "deep work" slots using the Forest App: you "grow a tree" while focusing—helps reduce distractions and keeps you accountable
- Start a weekly "Pressure Log": Every Friday, write down:

## Increased Isolation the Longer You Stay

**Issue:** Social energy fades, cultural fatigue sets in, and homesickness deepens.

### Specific Self-Help Solutions:

- Anchor weekly activities around identity:  
Eg., make Friday night "Chinese dinner + call home" night.
- Watch a Chinese-language show with friends every Sunday (Douban-rated dramas or Bilibili content).
- Use Meetup.com or university event calendars to attend 1 local event per month (music, board games, art tours). Set a "solo interaction goal": talk to 1 new person at each event.
- Rebuild "home" through environment:  
Decorate your dorm/apartment with small comforts from home (Chinese books, snacks, photos).
- Burn a familiar incense or keep a Chinese playlist for down moments.

## Caffeine & Sleep Quality

**Issue:** Surprising correlation between regular coffee and better sleep (possibly due to structured habits.)

### Specific Self-Help Solutions:

- Set a "coffee rhythm":  
One cup between 8:30-10:30 AM only.  
Switch to herbal tea (like chamomile or rooibos) in the afternoon.
- Use a caffeine tracker like "Caffeine Tracker" app or simply a calendar note to monitor intake and compare to sleep patterns.
- Pair caffeine with routines: e.g., drinking coffee → starting study → reward with a walk → sleep at fixed hour. This consistency likely contributes to better sleep, more than the caffeine itself.



## 02 Private mental health defender at your service!

### Mental-Health Apps

#### Headspace

Description: An app that helps you create life-changing habits to support your mental health.

Language: English

Available on both iPhone (Apple iOS) and Android.

Cost: Free to download with a 14-day trial included; subscription rates apply thereafter based on your chosen plan.



### In-Person Counseling Services

Note: Usually people find mental health services based on their locations, however, there are some platforms that can connect you with a licensed mental health counselor that you can meet in-person. You may also consult with your family physician and or primary care doctor for counselor recommendations.

#### Asian Mental Help Collective:

- Contact: Please use this form to hear back from the organization; response would take about 4-6 weeks
- Email: [therapy@asianmhc.org](mailto:therapy@asianmhc.org)
- Language: Chinese & English
- Connects individuals to licensed Asian-identifying therapists to provide help and support through culturally-informed clinical services.

#### BetterHelp:

- Phone Number: 888-688-9296
- Email: [Contact@BetterHelp.com/contact/](mailto:Contact@BetterHelp.com/contact/)
- Language: Chinese & English
- Cost Estimate: \$65-\$100 per week; offers some free sessions.
- Available 24/7
- Available to chat through video, phone, live chat, messaging with counselors that can assist with issues such anxiety,

### Crisis Support

#### 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

- Phone: 988
- Available 24/7 with a crisis help counselor
- Languages: English
- Available to chat about your own mental health struggles, emotional distress, alcohol or drug use concerns, or just need someone to talk to.

#### Crisis Text Line

- Text-Number: 741-741
- Available 24/7 with a volunteer crisis counselor
- Languages: English
- Available to chat about anxiety, depression, eating disorders, self-suicide, self-harm, gun violence, etc.



# Thank You!

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